

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1 - 20. (canceled)

1 21. (new) A method of operating a spinneret having a
2 multiplicity of spinning apertures through which a molten plastic
3 is forced to form filaments, the method comprising the steps of:

4 a) closing dirt-contaminated or clogged spinning
5 apertures of the spinneret with plugs consisting at least in part
6 of at least one oxidizable binder substance consisting at least
7 partially of amorphous carbon which, upon oxidative decomposition
8 is destroyed;

9 b) subjecting at least a portion of the device containing
10 the apertures and the plugs to a pyrolysis treatment for breakdown
11 of residual plastic on the portion of the device; and

12 c) subjecting the portion of the device to an oxidative
13 treatment to oxidize the substance and destroy the binder substance
14 of the plugs.

1 22. (new) The method defined in claim 21 wherein the
2 plugs consist of graphite and the oxidizable substance.

1 23. (new) The method defined in claim 21 wherein the
2 pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out at a subatmospheric
3 pressure.

1 24. (new) The method defined in claim 23 wherein the
2 pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out under inert
3 conditions.

1 25. (new) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the
2 oxidative treatment of step c) is carried out at a temperature
3 above 100°C in the presence of at least one oxidizing medium.

1 26. (new) The method defined in claim 25 wherein the
2 oxidative treatment is carried out at a temperature above 150°C.

1 27. (new) The method defined in claim 26 wherein the
2 oxidative treatment is carried out at a temperature between 210°C
3 and 600°C.

1 28. (new) The method defined in claim 27 wherein the
2 oxidative treatment is carried out at a temperature of 250°C to
3 550°C.

1 29. (new) The method defined in claim 28 wherein the
2 oxidative treatment is carried out at a temperature of 350°C to
3 500°C.

1 30. (new) The method defined in claim 29 wherein the
2 oxidizing medium is air or pure oxygen.

1 31. (new) The method defined in claim 30 wherein the
2 oxidative treatment is carried out at a reduced pressure.

1 32. (new) The method defined in claim 31 wherein the
2 portion is cleaned following at least one of the treatments in an
3 ultrasound bath.

1 33. (new) The method defined in claim 32 wherein the
2 portion is cleaned following at least one of the treatments with a
3 high-pressure cleaner.

1 34. (new) The method defined in claim 21 wherein the
2 pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out at a subatmospheric
3 pressure.

1 35. (new) The method defined in claim 21 wherein the
2 pyrolysis treatment of step b) is carried out under inert
3 conditions.

1 36. (new) The method defined in claim 21 wherein the
2 oxidative treatment of step c) is carried out at a temperature
3 between 350°C to 500°C in the presence of at least one oxidizing

4 medium selected from the group consisting of air, oxygen-enriched
5 air and pure oxygen.

1 37. (new) The method defined in claim 21, further
2 comprising the step of
3 cleaning the portion following at least one of the
4 treatments in an ultrasound bath.

1 38. (new) The method defined in claim 21, further
2 comprising the step of
3 cleaning the portion following at least one of the
4 treatments with a high-pressure cleaner.